



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Oct. 11, 2005

For More Information, Contact:  
Kathleen Mangskau, Director  
Division of Tobacco Control and Prevention  
North Dakota Department of Health  
Phone: 701.328.4517  
E-mail: [kmangska@state.nd.us](mailto:kmangska@state.nd.us)

### **Secondhand Smoke Affects Children's Health**

BISMARCK, N.D. – In conjunction with *Home Indoor Air Quality Month*, the North Dakota Department of Health is reminding families about the negative impact of secondhand smoke on children's health.

Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed October 2005 as *Home Indoor Air Quality Month* to encourage North Dakotans to learn more about indoor air quality issues.

"Smoke causes many serious medical problems in children," said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. "That's why it is so important for parents to take steps to protect their children from secondhand smoke."

According to Dwelle, children are significantly impacted by secondhand smoke. Exposure to the poisons in secondhand smoke put children at risk of severe respiratory diseases. Secondhand smoke is a known cause of low birth weight, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia and middle ear infections. The health effects of secondhand smoke exposure during childhood can last a lifetime.

Parents can take some very important steps to help ensure a smoke-free environment for their children. These include:

- Never let anyone smoke in your home or in your car.
- Never let anyone smoke in your child's bedroom.
- Take your children to restaurants, shopping malls and other public places that are smoke free.
- Be sure that schools, the baby sitter's home and day cares are smoke free.

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200  
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: [health@state.nd.us](mailto:health@state.nd.us)

*Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).*

If parents smoke and want to quit, they can contact the North Dakota Tobacco Quitline at 1.866.388.7848 for assistance with quitting.

For more information about secondhand smoke, contact Kathleen Mangskau, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.4517 or 800.280.5512. For more information about *Home Indoor Air Quality Month*, contact DuWayne Gerving, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5188.

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